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February 29, 2008

Gene Tinker
Animal Feeding Operations Coordinator
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Wallace State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Mr. Tinker,

I am writing to offer the strong support of the Iowa Environmental Council for the Animal Feeding Operations (AFO) database project proposed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The Iowa Environmental Council believes this project will be a useful resource for the DNR, livestock producers, and the public. This database will provide needed integration of permit and compliance information for the large number of AFO facilities in the state. This database will also help the DNR better track permit applications and manure management plans, assure proper siting of livestock facilities and compliance with state permit requirements, and provide timely access of permit information for livestock producers and the public.

The Iowa Environmental Council is particularly pleased to see that the database will provide Geographic Information System (GIS) data on AFO facilities that will allow better assessment of impacts on environmentally sensitive areas such as floodplains, vulnerable groundwater aquifers, and impaired waters. This GIS information will also make it possible to overlay the AFO database information with other GIS data layers such as manure spills and fish kills.

The Iowa Environmental Council sees this AFO database project as a critical tool for Iowa's livestock industry, to help producers reduce the environmental impact of their livestock facilities and improve water quality. We also believe that public access to the database will improve public input in the permitting process. We are pleased to offer our support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marian Riggs Gelb". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marian Riggs Gelb
Executive Director